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LETTER DATED 6 JULY 1999 FROM THE CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF YUGOSLAVIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

I have the honour to forward herewith the statement of the Government of the Yugoslav constituent Republic of Serbia regarding the joint statement signed in Pristina on 2 July 1999 by Bishop Artemije of Pristina and Momcilo Trajkovic with Hashim Thaci, under the auspices of United Nations and KFOR representatives (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Vladislav JOVANOVIC
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

Annex

Statement of the Government of the Yugoslav constituent Republic of Serbia

The Government of the Republic of Serbia was informed today of the joint statement which was, under the auspices of UN and KFOR representatives, signed on 2 July 1999 in Pristina, by Bishop Artemije of Pristina and Momcilo Trajkovic with Hashim Thaci.

The Government of the Republic of Serbia expresses utmost indignation and condemns the attempts at manipulating the sentiments and the name of the Serb people in Kosovo and Metohija by the United Nations representatives who orchestrated a meeting of the alleged "representatives of the Serb people" with the Albanian representatives. The reason for such indignation, which triggered fierce reaction among a great number of Serbs and Montenegrins from Kosovo and Metohija, are the following:

1. The alleged representatives of the Serb people (Bishop Artemije of Pristina and Momcilo Trajkovic) represent only themselves. The Serbs from Kosovo and Metohija and other peoples elect their representatives. They have not delegated this right to United Nations representatives. A United Nations representative has no right to designate who of the Serbs from Kosovo will represent the Serb interests.

2. The contents of the signed "document", which, allegedly, should be devoted to reconciliation and tolerance, which, for the Government of the Republic of Serbia and the Serb people, has always been a noble goal, has been grossly abused.

Before the eyes of the entire world, it is sought to portray that the alleged Serb representatives approve of, or, to say the least, absolve the crimes of the terrorist KLA and the crimes of NATO. Both of them, the crimes of Albanian terrorists and the crimes of NATO, according to the signed "declaration", have been absolved both by United Nations representatives and by the so-called Serb representatives. Together, they go even further. They accuse the legitimate Yugoslav authorities of crimes for their legitimate resistance to the terrorism of the Albanian separatist movement and the criminal aggression of NATO.

The Government points out that in 11 weeks, in which the "parties signatories" condemn the "crimes" of the regime - which have not been established by anyone nor can be established on the basis of accurate facts and truth - that in 11 weeks 21,700 tons of NATO bombs have been dropped on Yugoslavia and that, as the first bombs fell, the leadership of the Albanian separatist movement, over Radio Tirana, called upon its terrorist gangs to engage in killing across Kosovo and Metohija, which caused unforeseeable consequences in this territory. There is relevant material evidence to this effect as well as evidence of NATO crimes and the crimes of terrorist gangs called KLA, which the authors of the "declaration" do not have.

There is an obvious intent on the part of the perpetrators of genocide against the Serb people to have someone on behalf of the Serb people absolve and annihilate the crimes of KLA terrorists and the NATO aggressor in the eyes of the world public and erase the countless victims and the suffering of the Serb people and other peoples in Kosovo and Metohija, which unfortunately, even before the very eyes of the United Nations and KFOR representatives still take place, and to portray the defenders of the homeland as criminals. This is a historical disgrace, a repeated killing of the dead, which deserves to be condemned in strongest terms by all citizens of Serbia and the entire world public.

There is a danger that such an act by United Nations representatives, who staged this meeting, erodes legal as well as all moral principles upon which the United Nations is based. By such activity by the highest United Nations representatives, the crime is termed as law and the law is termed a crime. The crimes are absolved and the legitimate right of a State to self-defence is termed a crime.

The Government of the Republic of Serbia wishes to draw the attention of the entire international public to this shameful attempt at deceit and to express indignation with the United Nations representatives who have been deployed in Kosovo and Metohija on the basis of a Security Council resolution and who, instead of implementing that resolution, and above all, guaranteeing the security of all in Kosovo and Metohija, have put themselves in the service of hushing up the crimes of the NATO aggression against a sovereign country and hushing up the ruthless crimes of terrorists, unrecorded in history.

The Government of the Republic of Serbia deeply believes that by the continuation of a political process which is forward-looking and of life in tolerance and democracy in Kosovo and Metohija, a lasting peace can be achieved and considers that political talks among legitimate, not just any, representatives of all national communities should start immediately.